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ABSTRACT

Las Cruces Public Schools (Dona Ana County, New Mexico) is the second largest school district in New Mexico serving 6% of the state's public school students. Enrollment, declining in the late 1970s to a 1980-81 low of 15,349 students, has increased steadily through the 1986-87 school year, when 17,207 students were enrolled, primarily in grades K-5. The district includes 17 elementary schools, 4 junior high schools, 1 combined elementary-junior high school, 2 high schools, an alternative high school, and a night high school. Increased enrollments and educational requirements have led to an aggressive expansion and modernization effort funded through voter support for bond issues and tax levies. School population reflects a blend of ethnic/cultural backgrounds--45% Anglo, 52% Hispanic, and 3% Native American. Demographic samples show that the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills for 1983-84 through the 1986-87 school years given to 3rd, 5th, and 8th graders have been at or above the national average performance. Information on the proportions of teaching staff to administrative and support staff, pupil/teacher ratios, training and experience level of staff members, and percentage of students requiring special education and bilingual services is provided. The of teaching staff to administrative and support staff, pupil/teacher ratios, training and experience level of staff members, and percentage of students requiring special education and bilingual services is provided. The New Mexico High School Proficiency Exam is outlined. Scholarship and award winners are listed. (JMM)

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LAS CRUCES PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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A VIEW OF OUR SCHOOLS

1986-87 SCHOOL YEAR

LAS CRUCES PUBLIC SCHOOLS

LAS CRUCES PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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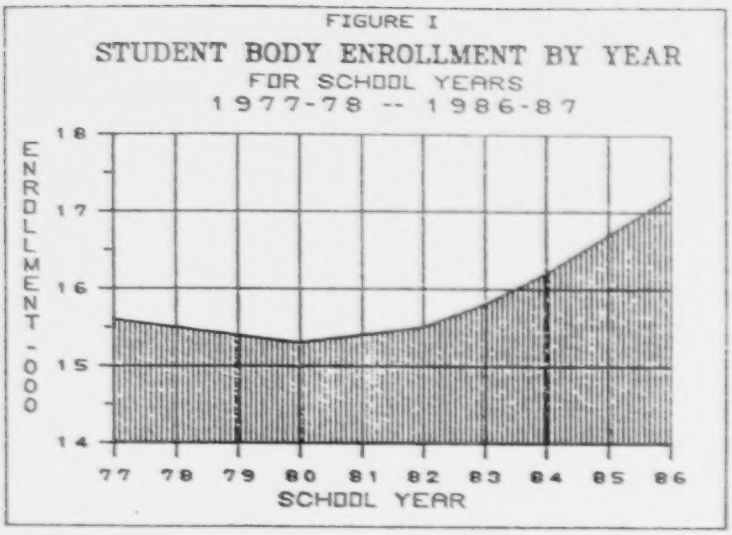
Prepared by Jerry C. Cavatta, Ph.D.
Director, Data Services & Evaluation

June 1987

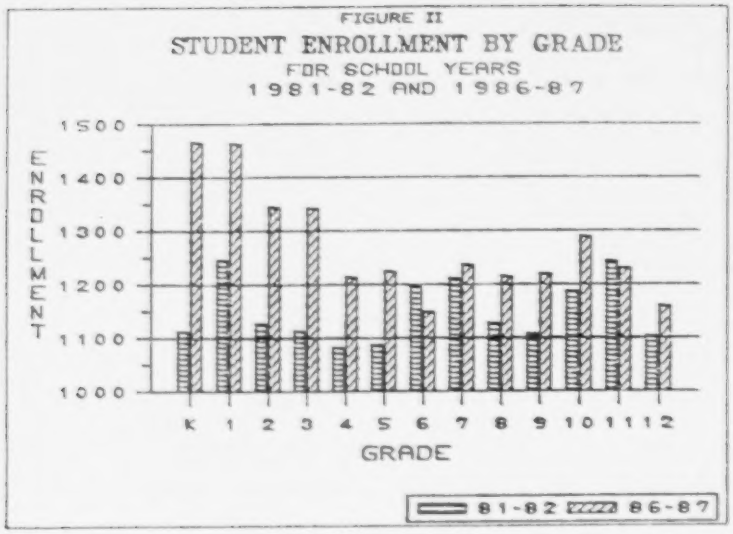
Second Printing - September 1987

FIGURE I



Located in south central New Mexico and covering the middle third of Dona Ana County, Las Cruces Public Schools is the second largest school district in New Mexico and serves 6% of the state's public school students. District enrollment levels for the past ten years are illustrated in Figure I above. During the last half of the 1970's student enrollment declined each year to a 1980-81 low of 15,349 students. Since then, enrollment levels have steadily increased through the 1986-87 school year when 17,207 students were enrolled. Current enrollment projections suggest that by the 1996-97 school year, enrollment in our district will exceed 24,000 students.

Increased enrollments over the past five years have been primarily due to increases in the early elementary school grades. Enrollments by grade for the 1981-82 and the 1986-87 school year are presented in Figure II. While enrollments increased at all grades except grades 6 and 11 over the last five years, notable increases can be seen in grades K through 5. While overall enrollment went up 11% in five years, enrollments in grades K through 5 increased 19% during the same period.



The district currently operates 17 elementary schools enrolling students in kindergarten through grade 6. Students whose fifth birthday occurs before September 1 of the school year may enroll in kindergarten. Headstart programs are offered to 5 year old students who qualify. Our secondary school program includes four junior high schools (grades 7, 8, and 9), one junior high combined with an elementary school, two senior high schools (grades 10 through 12), an alternative high school, and a night high school. Currently, high school students must successfully complete 21 credits to graduate. Beginning with the ninth grade class in the 1986-87 school year, students will be required to complete 23 credits and pass a state proficiency exam to graduate.

Increased enrollments and educational requirements have led to an aggressive expansion and modernization effort funded through voter support for bond issues and tax levies. From the Fall of 1976 to the present, our district constructed five new elementary school buildings; one replaced an existing school and four were new schools. The district has replaced two junior high buildings with two new facilities, and another new facility will open next year when our district converts from junior high schools (grades 7, 8 & 9) to middle schools (grades 6, 7 & 8).

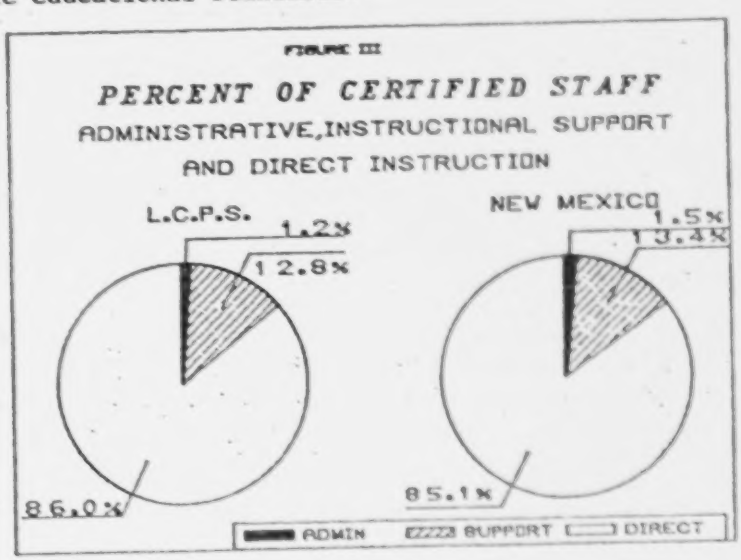
Educationally certified staff serve as the primary means of delivering educational services to students. The nature of the staff and the work they perform influence the success of our schools and the achievement of our students. Data which help describe our certified staff are provided in Table I and Figure III. For descriptive purposes, certified staff can be divided into three general categories by the work they perform: administrative (superintendent, assistant superintendents, directors, etc.), instructional support (principals, counselors, librarians, etc.) and direct instruction (teachers). As can be seen in Table I, for the 1986-87 school year, our district employed 999.8 full time equivalent certified staff of which 860.1 had direct instructional responsibilities. In Figure III, the 1986-87 school year percent of staff assigned administrative, instructional support and direct instruction responsibilities is displayed for our district and for all public schools in New Mexico. Our district had a smaller percent of certified staff assigned to administration (1.2%) and to instructional support (12.8%) than the state averages (1.5% and 13.4%, respectively). As a result, we had a higher percent of staff (86.0) assigned direct instructional (teaching) duties than the state (85.1). The state average data for the past five years are not presented in this report; however, for each preceding year, our district has had a higher portion of its certified staff assigned direct teaching responsibility.

TABLE I

STAFF	SCHOOL YEAR 82-83	83-84	84-85	85-86	86-87
CERTIFIED STAFF					
TOTAL NUMBER	923.5	905.3	961.6	981.5	999.8
NUMBER INSTRUCTIONAL	791.5	778.4	828.4	846.2	860.1
% OF CERTIFIED STAFF:					
ADMINISTRATIVE	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.4	1.2
INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT	13.2	13.1	12.8	12.4	12.8
DIRECT INSTRUCTION	85.7	86.0	86.1	86.2	86.0
% TEACHERS WITH MA DEGREE OR ABOVE	47.0	50.4	52.4	51.4	50.8
AVERAGE YEARS TEACHING EXPERIENCE	10.6	11.2	11.2	11.3	11.9
OVERALL PUPIL/TEACHER RATIO	19.6	20.3	19.5	18.9	20.0

Data on the training and experience of levels of our teaching staff are also presented in Table I. The percent of our staff who possessed a master's degree or above increased from 47% during the 1982-83 school year to 50.8% for 1986-87. For the 1986-87 school year this level of training was considerably higher than the statewide average of 46.7%. Experience levels among teachers are measured using average number of years of teaching experience. While over the past five years the average years of teaching experience possessed by our teachers has moved up from 10.6 years to an average of 11.9 years, these averages have been consistently below statewide averages.

Pupil/teacher ratios are frequently cited as another measure of the resources applied to the instructional process. Overall pupil/teacher ratios are determined by dividing the total number of students enrolled by the total number of full time equivalent instructional staff. These values are presented in Table I. Over the past five years overall P/T ratios for our district have ranged from a high of 20.3 students per teacher to a low of 18.9 students per teacher. Pupil/teacher ratios within individual classes or grades in our elementary schools and the number of students taught each day by secondary school teachers (pupil loads per day) are monitored and comply with state educational standards.



The economic, educational and cultural makeup of our community is significantly influenced by the presence of White Sands Missile Range, a space age military technology center, New Mexico State University, our state's land grant institution, our proximity to the border with Mexico and the agricultural richness and tradition of the Mesilla Valley. Each of these factors contributes to make our student population diverse in cultural and educational background, needs, and aspirations. The data presented in Table II address some of the elements of this diversity and our schools' efforts to meet the needs of each student. Data for the 1986-87 school year are not as yet available. The last line in Table II contains statewide data and is provided for comparison purposes.

Our school population reflects a blend of ethnic and cultural backgrounds among our students: 45% are Anglo, 52% are Hispanic and 3% are Native American, Black and Others. Demographic samples taken each year through our testing program suggest that as many as 20% of our students speak a language other than English in their homes. Many speak English as a second language to Spanish. Programs of bilingual education and English as a second language have been implemented to address the special language needs and interests of our students. The need for these services is strongest in early grades and the data presented under Percent Bilingual in Table II are the number of students receiving state funded services expressed as a percent of enrollments in grades one to three.

Our schools make a special effort to identify students who are both economically and educationally disadvantaged. Within federal resources and guidelines, schools with the highest percent of these students are allocated supplementary funds to provide specialized reading and math labs. A Youth Tutoring Youth (YTY) program also employs senior high school students to provide individualized reading and math tutoring to these children. The percent of students receiving these services are shown in Table II as % Chapter I.

Students with special instructional needs related to a diagnosed learning exceptionality are served through a program of special education funded by the State of New Mexico and through Public Law 94-142. For the 1986-87 school year, 2,286 students received such services. The percent of our students with moderate and severe disabilities (C and D level special education students) is presented in Table II under percent special education. Our special education services include Advanced Education Program (AEP) services for students identified as gifted. The educational programs for these students include placement in classes selected to optimize their learning experiences in the gifted area(s). Beginning this year developmentally disabled four year old students also received special education service.

TABLE II

STUDENT POPULATION	LAS CRUCES				STATE
	82-83	83-84	84-85	85-86	85-86
ETHNIC MAKEUP					
% ANGLO	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	47.2
% HISPANIC	52.0	53.0	52.0	52.0	40.3
% NA, BLK, OTHERS	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	12.5
% BILINGUAL ED.	30.8	28.9	28.0	28.0	53.3
% CHAPTER I	10.0	10.8	12.6	11.5	11.1
% SP.ED. (C&D ONLY)	3.6	3.8	4.1	3.9	4.7
MOBILITY RATE	28.6	27.7	26.6	26.7	28.6

FIGURE IV

CTBS NAT'L PERCENTILE SCORES

FOR 1984-1987

GRADE 3

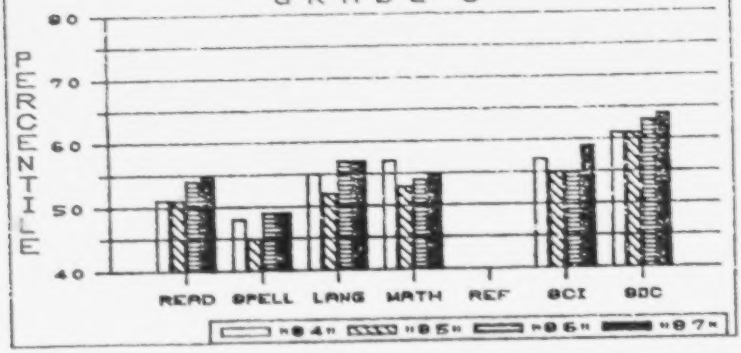


FIGURE V

CTBS NAT'L PERCENTILE SCORES

FOR 1984-1987

GRADE 5

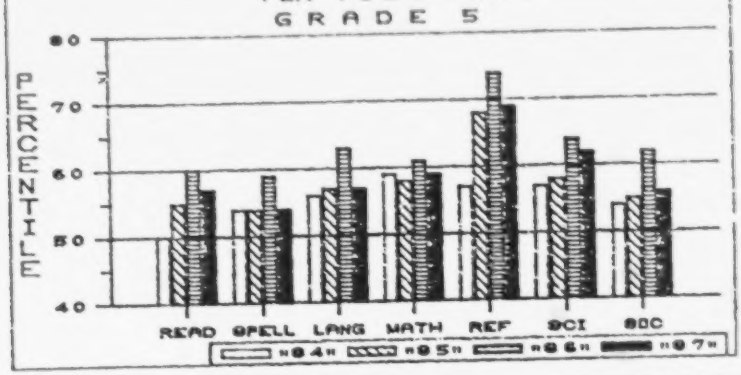
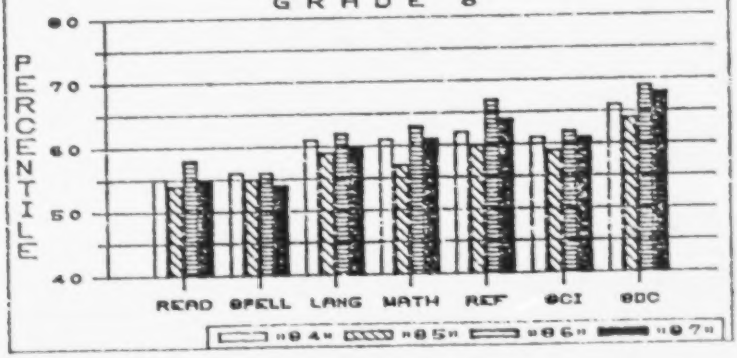


FIGURE VI

CTBS NAT'L PERCENTILE SCORES

FOR 1984-1987

GRADE 8



Our schools strive to develop in each student a set of skills, abilities and attitudes which will serve the student throughout life. In the process of educating students, schools provide a rich array of learning experiences to develop the academic, social, physical, cultural and personal dimensions of each child. At the core of this process our schools work to develop basic skills in reading, language arts, mathematics, reference skills, science and social studies. To help monitor progress toward these limited goals, the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) is given in the spring of each school year to all students enrolled in grades 3, 5 and 8. Figures IV, V and VI on the facing page provide a four year overview of our students' performance on CTBS tests in reading, language arts, mathematics, reference skills, science and social studies. These scores are presented in the form of national percentiles which give us an indication of how our students performed as compared with the performance of a large national sample of students. A percentile score of 55, for example, would indicate that the average score for our student was higher than the scores for 55% of the students in the national sample.

The four bars over each test area represent scores in that test area for our students in the 1983-84, 1984-85, 1985-86 and 1986-87 school years. Over the past four years our students test performance has been at or above the national average performance, the 50th percentile in most areas tested.

During the past school year our district participated in pilot testing a new test developed to assess student competencies at grades 3, 5 and 8. The Proficiency Assessment Checkpoint Examination (PACE) supplements the currently used CTBS to produce a measure of student performance on checkpoint competencies currently being developed to prepare students for future high school graduation testing requirements (see next page). This year the PACE test covered the areas of language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.

In 1977, the New Mexico State Board of Education adopted the New Mexico Basic Skills Plan. This plan identified a number of life skills to be taught and learned in our schools. One part of this plan addresses writing skills and requires that high school students demonstrate writing proficiency by actually producing four writing samples which are scored and graded.

The plan also requires that all school districts administer the New Mexico High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE), an objective test which assesses life skills in consumer economics, community resources, mental and physical health, government and law, and occupational knowledge. This test also assesses performance in reading, language arts, math, science and social studies; but these sections are not currently used for proficiency assessment purposes.

Students have their first opportunity to demonstrate proficiency at grade 10. The test is administered each spring and students who did not demonstrate proficiency at grade 10 are allowed to retake the test at grades 11 and 12. The percent of our students and students statewide who successfully demonstrate proficiency on their first attempt are presented in Figure VII. Currently students who successfully pass both the writing appraisal and the HSPE are awarded a differentiated diploma. Beginning with the next year's tenth grade class students will be required to pass a competency test prior to graduating from high school. Student competencies have been identified by the State Board of Education in reading, language, math, science and social studies. As noted above the current HSPE contains questions to test these areas. Our school district is currently aligning curriculum and instructional practices to address these competencies.

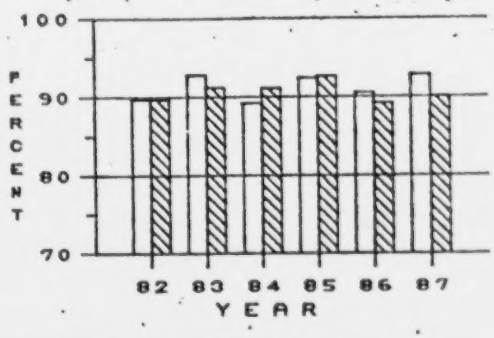
Most of our college bound students complete the American College Test (ACT) as part of college or university admission requirements. The ACT assesses student achievement in the content areas of English, math, social studies and science. Most colleges use these results as either minimum admission requirements or as information for placement in college classes and programs. ACT scores for our students and students

FIGURE VII

Percent Passing the H.S.P.E.

L.C.P.S. and New Mexico*

(1982-1987)



* 10th GRADE STUDENTS ONLY

LCPS STATE

statewide are presented in Table III. For the 1985-86 school year, the most recent year for which data are available, 525 of our students took the ACT. During the same school year 88 of our students completed the College Board/Scholastic Aptitude Test. This is an admission requirement in a relatively small number of schools in the western half of the U.S. Over the years our students who elect to take the SAT scored considerably higher than national averages.

TABLE III
ACT TEST RESULTS
LCPS AND NEW MEXICO

ACT	LAS CRUCES				STATE
	82-83	83-84	84-85	85-86	85-86
ENGLISH	17.3	18.0	18.6	18.9	17.8
MATHEMATICS	16.4	17.4	17.2	16.8	15.8
SOCIAL STUDIE	17.3	17.6	17.7	18.1	16.6
NATURAL SCIECE	21.2	21.4	21.8	21.9	20.7
COMPOSITE	18.2	18.7	19.0	19.0	17.9

In all areas of our school program our students excel and frequently achieve special awards and recognition. In a document of this size it is not possible to identify all who deserve recognition. Listed below are those Las Cruces Public School students who were awarded scholarships this year. We congratulate them and wish them well.

Adams, Micaela
Adams, Scott
Alvarez, Bella E.
Alvarez, Edvard
Ashworth, Amanda
Bean, John
Bennett, Christina
Bennett, David
Billingsley, Tonya
Birnbaum, Eva
Bock, Gertrude
Bogart, Rhonda
Burr, Susan
Butler, Brandon
Call, Theresa
Commack, Carol
Cano, Karin
Carlson, Vanessa
Carter, Byron
Castillas, Michelle R.
Chapparo, Maria
Daines, Kiri J.
Davis, Patrick
DeLaCruz, Maria
Delamater, Lisa
de St. Germain, Dave
de St. Germain, Howard
Dominguez, Sylvia
Duffey, Jerry
Dufursen, Jeffrey
Dyche, Lisa
Edwards, John
Farley, Julee
Farmer, Michael
Fielder, Shawn
Flores, Veronica S.
Flowers, Matthew
Frye, Kimberly
Galloway, Jodie
Gibson, Michael
Giles, Troy F.
Gilligan, Ted
Gonzales, Antony
Gradillas, Angela
Graham, Corey
Groves, Guenevere R.
Groves, Paula J.
Guebara, Rachel
Guiffre, Thomas M.
Haaland, Kari
Harrington, Leslie
Hayes, Eugene
Heape, Laura
Hofer, Christopher
Hoffman, Tina C.
Hughes, Angela
Johnson, Michael
Kasemsap, Pavitta
Kassin, Christopher M.
Kemp, Rebecca
Lange, Stephan
Kuester, Stacie
Larsen, Catherine
Leonard, Adrian
Leonard, Kelly T.
Lopez, Cristobal
Lopez, Robert
Luttrell, Ben
Maag, Debra
Maese, Celestia
Magallanes, Daniel
Maness, Susan
McCool, Leah
McDowell, Colin
McLaughlin, Jason
McPherson, Linda
Medina, Marcos
Mender, Shelia
Mendoza, John
Merlich, Jennifer
Miller, William
Mobley, Jeffrey
Montano, Phillip
Montes, Yvonne
Moore, Chipper E.
Morey, Benjamin
Morrison, Stephen
Mueller, Britta
Norman, Holly
Nystual, Daisy L.
Ochoa, Edvard
Ontiveros, Corina
Ontiveros, Fernando
Ortiz, Joseph
Ostes, Ray A.
Padilla, Ray
Parks, Jeffery M.
Parnham, Christine
Pippen, Leann
Randall, Jack
Rathbun, Amanda L.
Rhoades, Jeffrey C.
Risser, Edward
Rolfe, Scott
Romero, Art
Ross, Catherine A.
Sadler, Will
Schnitzer, Barbara
Schoonover, Lisa M.
Seota, Julianne
Sells, Karen
Seirp, Andrew E.
Sharp, Rebecca L.
Shouman, Marian
Smith, Jeanette
Smith, Stephanie L.
Smorynski, Ronald
Snyder, Wendy J.
Stockton, Shad
Stoneberg, Lawrence
Sturtz, Paula
Thompson, Michael
Thompson, Shannon
Tidwell, William
Urglaub, Carolyn
Uttley, Scott A.
Wade, Christopher M.
Warner, Dawn E.
Wilburn, James R.
Wilburn, Michael D.
Wood, Marisa
Wright, Robert
Zander, Lisa
Zeigler, Michele
Zivkovich, Shelley A.

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We believe Las Cruces has the finest public school system in New Mexico. We also believe our teachers and staff are the finest to be found anywhere. Many have made notable contributions this year and we wish each could be acknowledged here. Some special accomplishments include:

Special Accomplishments

1. Stephen M. Bennett
   Las Cruces Public Schools
   Teacher of the Year

2. Jimmy Oliver
   Golf Coach of the Year
   New Mexico Region VIII

3. Magic Carpet
   Quality Education Award
   First Place

4. Ingrid Luchini
   Mayfield High School
   German Program
   Quality Education Award
   Honorable Mention

5. Pat Norman
   Boss of the Year
   LCEOP

6. Sandy Heath
   Secretary of the Year
   LCEOP

7. Kathy Easterling
   Advanced Placement Recognition Award
   College Board SW Region

8. James Graham
   NM Vocational Agriculture
   Teacher of the Year, 1987

9. Youth Tutoring Youth
   SDE Nominee to USDE
   Exemplary Program for
   Disadvantaged Children

10. Kay Kindt
    We the People Award
    Law Day Committee, Dona Ana County

11. Arthur Scott
    Sponsor of the Year, 1987
    NM Science & Engineering Fair
    Regional & State

12. Mayfield High School
    State History Day
    2 Students to National

13. Mayfield High School
    State Speech Tournament
    1st Place Duo Drama
    3rd Place Oral Interp

14. Zia Jr. High School
    State Science Fair
    1st Place Alternate International
    2nd Place Junior Division, Zoology
    4th Place Senior Division, Behav & Soc Sci

15. Las Cruces High School
    Marching Band
    State Marching Festival
    First Place

16. Las Cruces High School
    Symphonic Winds
    State Honor Band

17. Mayfield High School
    AAAA Boys Track
    State Champions

18. Mayfield High School
    AAAA Golf Team
    State Runner Up

19. Las Cruces High School
    Modernaires
    Best Musical Performing Group
    State

20. Las Cruces High School
    State
    Tennis - Doubles

21. Las Cruces High School
    State Champion
    Individual Wrestling

22. Las Cruces High School
    State Champion
    Individual Swimming

1987 National Merit Finalists

LCHS: Theresa Call
John D. De St. Germain
Jefferry Duhraen
Hugh Genin
Stephen Morrison
Edward Riesen

MMS: Mariam Showman

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